

Oxford Newsletter

Wild Blueberry Capital of Canada

June, 2019

Mural Contest

We'll be keeping a close eye on a certain down town building this summer. Cumberland Performing Arts and Ruth Collins Music Studio have taken the initiative to install a Musical and Performing Arts Mural on the building adjacent to Wild Blueberry Corner at Water Street and Main. To obtain the design, they are holding a **contest and inviting Cumberland youth ages 8 to 18** to enter a drawing which commemorates the rich variety and history of music and performing arts in the Oxford area. Details and entry forms are on Cumberland Performing Arts face book page and the Town of Oxford website. Entry forms are also available at the Town Hall, **with June 3 the deadline to enter.**

Oxford Riverside Gallery

Currently the gallery is showing "**Dreams and Nightmares**", an exhibition of sequential art by Jackie Wheaton who has just completed the artwork for the first chapter of her graphic novel. This exhibit is followed by the "**OREC Summer Exhibition**", with the **Opening Night** event beginning at 7:30 p.m. on June 26. Please come out and support our youth.

Keeping Active Over 55

Oxford **Floor Shuffleboard Club** for those 55 and older will be back in action on May 29. If you think you're too old, think again. The Club includes men and women in their 80's and 90's who attend regularly and report having a great time. You are welcome to join at any point during the season and your first shuffle day is free! This is a fun and inexpensive opportunity to keep active and socialize so be sure to check it out. Contact David Rushton for more information: 902 447-3294.

The **Fundy 55+ Games, June 3-19**, which includes shuffleboard right here in Oxford, has a variety of activities being offered in several locations. Registration forms and schedule are available at the Town Hall. Contact Corey at our Recreation Department for more information.

Pride Flag Raising in Oxford

In conjunction with the Cumberland Pride Committee, the Town of Oxford will raise the Pride Flag at a ceremony on Wednesday, June 12 at 6:00 p.m. followed by refreshments. Rain or Shine! Everyone Welcome!



Update on Town Hall Activities

The Town of Oxford was successful with a funding application to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) for the \$68,500 that was required to match the Provincial funding to complete the testing program on the **sinkhole**. Resistivity and seismic testing took place between May 8-17, and a report is to be completed sometime in June. This testing will provide more information around what is under the ground on the Lions Club property, particularly closer to Main Street. The testing is being done to determine safety issues for the public and around public infrastructure security.

Recently, Oxford residents were notified that the **Public Works Department will no longer be fixing plumbing issues** (both for water and wastewater) **within customers' homes**. Although this service has been provided in the past as a courtesy, this is not within the services that municipal governments should be providing. The responsibility of the Town is to ensure the main lines are clear and running freely. Repairs and any problems with plumbing within the home are the responsibility of the home owner. This is generally how municipalities operate across the province and the rest of Canada. If you experience any problems with your water and wastewater within your home, check with the Town to ensure the public lines are operational. Once that is confirmed, residents should contact their plumber to have the issue fixed within their home.

Did you know? The gazebo in our down town Heritage Square may be rented for small events? Call the Oxford Town Hall for more information (902 447-2170).

Update on Town Hall Activities (Cont'd)

Due to high policing costs, Oxford Town Council has undertaken a **review of the Town's policing services**. Currently, policing costs just over \$503,000 each year, which is 20% of the Town's operating budget. A review of the service delivery provided by the RCMP was completed and presented to both Oxford and Cumberland County Councils in March 2019. Several options that would help reduce costs, and as a result possibly reduce service levels, were presented. The Town has had preliminary discussions with the Amherst Police Department around potential policing service delivery and has formally requested a proposal on this. A review committee will be formed to evaluate the two service delivery proposals (both RCMP and Amherst) and a public consultation process will take place to provide information and gain feedback from Oxford residents prior to any formal decision by Council. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

Financial Management Policies: The Town of Oxford has been partnering with the Municipal Finance Corporation to assist in the development and implementation of financial management best practices. These are a set of core best practices for municipal governments that provide a framework for Town Council to ensure transparency, accountability, and future financial stability and viability. Procurement, reserve funds, audit committee and debt management are only some of the topics for policy development that have been put in place already.

Dangerous and Unsightly Premises: Now that the weather is improving, its time for lots of spring cleaning, both inside and out! Staff have been busy cleaning up damage from winter plowing, potholes will be fixed soon, and the flower baskets will be up before we know it. To help make our community shine, everyone is encouraged to clean up your yard and properly dispose of items that are laying around. The Town has the authority under the Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Act to require everyone to maintain a minimum standard of cleanliness and upkeep on their properties. Letters to property owners who need to take more action will be sent out shortly. Let's all work together and make Oxford as beautiful as it can be for all our community and visitors.

Keep an eye out for **the six new "wayfinding" signs** directing tourists to our restaurants, downtown, arena, art gallery, trails, etc. They will all be up soon.

Trademark Application: The Town has applied for an *Official Mark* for the term, *Wild Blueberry Capital of Canada*. An Official Mark is a trademark option for "public authorities" such as municipalities and is a less expensive option. We expect to know if our application is successful in three to six months.

Our Community Economic Development (CED) Officer will be out of the office from the second week in June until the last week in September. Please contact the Town Hall if you have any questions relating to this department.



Please see the Town website's "Calendar" menu **to keep up on community events**. This includes the **Community Events calendar that covers items submitted for upcoming months, as well as additional information that may come in after the paper calendar goes out.**

Wild Blueberry Harvest Festival – What Event are YOU Planning?

Success of this annual festival will depend on community involvement. During the past month, Town staff have been reaching out to Oxford businesses, organizations and individuals to encourage participation in Oxford's August 19-25 festival. Community events currently planned are listed on the Town website's Community Events Calendar. To date, they include a giant yard sale, an OPH Luncheon, a Fun Fashion Show and more. The Recreation Department will be adding additional activities. **If you have events to add, please contact Corey Skinner, Town of Oxford Recreation Director as soon as possible so that he'll be able to get them in the regional festival advertising.**

Editor: Ruthie Patriquin
Community Economic Development Officer (CEDO)